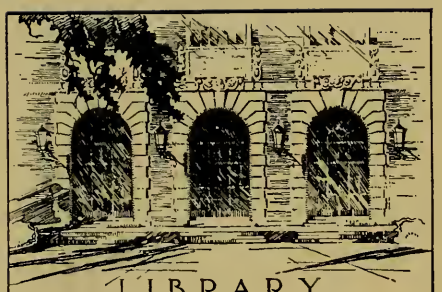

With Lord Halifax's Compliments.

15

PROPOSALS FOR MUTUAL EXPLANATION

EUCHARISTIC DOCTRINE

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BY

VISCOUNT HALIFAX

President of E. C. U.

AT THE ANNUAL MEETING AT THE CHURCH HOUSE

ON JUNE 21st, 1900

LONDON

Office of the English Church Union

35, WELLINGTON STREET, STRAND, W.C.

PROPOSALS FOR MUTUAL EXPLANATION

EUCHARISTIC DOCTRINE

THE last twelve months have been eventful months in the history of the Union. Much has happened since our last Annual Meeting, but this afternoon I desire to draw your attention to two matters only—one, the proposals that have been made in the interests of peace, for a conference between various parties in the Church, on questions now in dispute; the other, to the Declaration to be submitted to this Meeting in regard to the doctrine, and the practice which flows from such doctrine, of the Blessed Eucharist.

Death of Mr. Shaw Stewart.

Before doing so, however, there is one matter of a personal nature to which I must allude. The Union, during the thirty-three years I have had the honour to preside over it, has had many losses. How, indeed, in the course of so long a period could it have been otherwise? But I think amongst all its losses, it has never had so great a loss, certainly not in the number of its lay members, as the loss it has sustained by the death of Mr. Shaw Stewart. How shall I find words to express all that Mr. Shaw Stewart was? Happily, speaking to you, few are needed. He was my intimate friend for thirty-seven years. During the whole of that time I have never known him other than actively employed in work for the Church, and for the relief of suffering and distress. No labour was too great, no work too distasteful for him to undertake. He spent his money as freely as he spent himself.

Whether it was St. George's or the Fever Hospital, whether it was Guy's or the London Hospital, whether it was the Newport Market Refuge and School for Boys, which, in fact, owed, if not its actual beginning, certainly its continued existence and prosperity to him; whether it was a temporary hospital for cholera or smallpox; whether it was the House of Charity for the Relief of Distressed Persons—one and all, with many other institutions of a like kind which it would be too long to name, were the objects of his unflagging care, the recipients of his unbounded, yet wise and discriminating charity. I suppose that there was no more efficient member of the Bishop of London's Fund than Mr. Shaw Stewart. What he did for Keble College, first as Bursar, next as its most active member of its Council, would alone entitle him to the undying gratitude of Churchmen. It is pleasant in this connection to associate his name with those of Canon Liddon and Lord Beauchamp, two of his most intimate friends, parted for a short ten years, and now again re-united by death. Of this Union he was one of the oldest and most devoted members—always ready, always to be relied on, as courageous as he was considerate, regardless of popularity, indifferent to public opinion, he had but one ambition—to do his duty, but one desire—to serve God and man, and to fight the Church's battle to the utmost of his ability.

Of late years he has been a Vice-President of this Society. It was owing to him, as much, if not more than to anyone else, that the arrangements were made with Archbishop Tait and Bishop Jackson which brought peace after a struggle of more than ten years to St. Alban's, Holborn. He was a tower of strength to the Union, not only by reason of what he did, but by reason of what he was.

And as he lived so he died. It had always been his habit to attend a daily Celebration of the Holy Communion. He had made his Communion the very day he was taken ill, and when it was clear that death was approaching he said to those around him, "The hour of my death has come; I am going the way of all flesh. Do not keep me; let me go. To depart and be with Christ is far better. *Expectans expectavi.* Let me face death bravely, calmly, peacefully. It is a beautiful time to go—Ascensiontide. Let me depart in peace in the Name of the Lord." He died the day after Ascension Day.

Let us keep his name in perpetual remembrance, and let us pray God for him, as he would have wished himself, that he may be granted eternal rest and that light perpetual may shine upon him; for ourselves, that we may have grace to follow his good example, and that our last end may be like his.

Proposals for Mutual Explanation.

I address myself to the question of the Conference for the discussion in the interests of peace of existing matters of dispute.

In regard to those differences I ask again, as I asked at the London Diocesan Conference a short time ago, Is it possible for Christian men who realise how greatly our divisions impede the spread of the Gospel, what difficulties they put in the way of individual souls, what an encouragement they are to sin and unbelief, not earnestly to desire, and resolutely to determine, to take any step which may hold out even the faintest hope of promoting union and peace ?

An attitude of abstention on such a subject is one which it is impossible to justify. We owe it to our Lord, we owe it to the honour of His Name, to His love for the souls of men, to what He has done for ourselves, to do our utmost for the peace of the Church.

What can we do ? We cannot sacrifice truth, for the truth is not ours to give away; but we can confer for the purpose of ascertaining whether our differences are really as irreconcilable as they seem. We can, as the Bishop of London so well said the other day, define our terms. Cardinal Newman, a long time ago, pointed out that if men would only define their terms they would find, in most cases, that their differences were much less, and of much less importance, than they had supposed, or that they were differences of first principles, in regard to which all controversy was useless. Now, Prebendary Webb Peploe—and I mention his name because it has been brought into special prominence of late in connection with the proposed Conference—in a speech he made at the Meeting of the National Protestant Church Union on May 3rd, laid it down that a discussion of our differences must be based "on the acceptance of God's Word and the Formularies of the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England in their plain meaning." It is clear, therefore, that there is no question of a difference of first principles. It is not a question of religious truth in the abstract, but of what is stated in the plain words of the Bible, and of the interpretation put upon the Bible by the formularies of the Church of England. For myself, I could have no difficulty in accepting such a basis; nor is it to be doubted that upon such a basis, with a careful definition of terms, a sufficient knowledge of theology and history on the part of those summoned to meet, and a charitable desire on the part of both sides to put the best possible construction on the explanations which might be offered, a great step might be taken in the direction of peace.

In any case, it is surely a duty to take any step which holds out such a hope, and not, as seems to be the case in some quarters, the moment the words "conference" and "peace" are mentioned, to begin "preparing for battle."

The former has always been our attitude. The unworthy suggestion has been made that we have welcomed the idea of a conference for the sake of party interests, for the sake of gaining time, in order to entangle and compromise others, because we are afraid of a Protestant agitation. I can assure those responsible for these suggestions that we are not the least afraid of any Protestant agitation. That agitation, if it succeeds at all, can only succeed in destroying the existing relations of Church and State, and much as for many reasons I should regret that separation, it is not we who should have most to fear from such a catastrophe; indeed, I can see under existing circumstances a great many compensations which might arise out of it. No! We have welcomed the proposal of a conference for the sake of no accidental or party object; we have welcomed it solely in the interests of truth and peace. Nor is it any new suggestion arising out of present circumstances.

I find amongst my papers a letter dated Dec. 7, 1874, from myself to the Rev. William Cadman, Rector of Holy Trinity, Marylebone, the most leading Evangelical clergyman of his day in London.

The substantial passages in that letter are as follows:

"I venture to write to you . . . . because the more I think of it the more I feel convinced that it is a duty under existing circumstances imposed upon us all by Our Lord Himself to make the attempt by speaking to one another face to face to bring back peace amongst us . . . . whoever is right with respect to the matters under dispute he cannot be right who refuses to take the one means for restoring peace which Our Lord enjoins on His disciples. . . . . Want of union is our greatest evil. Is not the present an opportunity in charity, in love, above all in reliance upon our Lord's blessing promised to the peace makers, to come together and to see whether this state of strife and confusion need be prolonged? I imagine the possibility of such arrangements as should result in a conference to discuss our difficulties. This without sacrifice of principle on either side, upon the basis of no hollow truce, but upon the basis of an honest acceptance of the formularies of the Church of England."

To that letter Mr. Cadman replied on December 14. I give again the important passages:

"I must apologise for not writing sooner . . . . but I hesitated to dissipate those visions of peace which I hoped might be possible without compromise of truth to realise. . . . . Most thankful should I be to contribute to bring about any meeting or conference which might promise

any satisfactory results. . . . . But . . . . you are reported to have said at a late meeting of the English Church Union that 'Sacerdotalism' was really the Divine mission of the Church of Christ. Now it would be folly to conceal . . . . that many of us have not so learned Christ. The statements by 'one offering' our Great High Priest 'hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified,' and that 'where remission is,' according to the terms of the New Covenant, 'there is no more offering for sin,' appear to be so directly antagonistic to the statement which I have quoted that . . . . to meet for peace where there exist such opposite ideas of the true office of the Christian ministry—on the supposition, moreover, that both might be right—would be to sacrifice convictions of truth which many of us believe to be intimately connected with the honour and glory of Him Whom we all acknowledge to be our gracious and glorious Lord."

To that letter I replied on Dec. 16:—

"With respect to the main subject of your letter, it is just because none of those of whom you speak would accept the meaning you put upon their words that I thought and still think a conference for the purpose of mutual explanation might do much. There is no one among the so-called 'Ritualists,' however 'extreme' he may be supposed to be. but would repudiate anything derogating from the all-sufficiency of the Sacrifice offered upon the Cross, or who, by such words as you mention of mine, *i.e.*, 'the Divine mission of the clergy,' asserts anything beyond the literal meaning of the words—viz., that the functions of the clergy are derived, not by a delegation of authority from the body of Christian believers, but directly from God Himself.

"If the Dean of Chester could accept the formula on the subject of the Eucharistic Sacrifice agreed to at Bonn, and we can do the same, is it not distinct and positive proof that upon the very subject you mention explanations are possible which might reconcile our apparent differences, and therefore ought to be attempted? . . . . Your letter only increases my conviction that such a conference ought to be attempted. The very reasons you urge against it are the very reasons which seem to me to demonstrate its utility."

Mr. Cadman, however, declined to take part in such a conference as had been proposed. The Rev. Bourchier Wrey Savile, of Shillingford, near Exeter, who had begun by encouraging the idea, giving, in a letter dated January 21, 1875, as a reason, amongst others, for such refusal, that the "Queen's Majesty as Supreme Ordinary of the Church had decided in a lawful way against the Eastward Position and the vestments," and that such practices were still continued.

I do not know if history is about to repeat itself, but it would almost seem from Prebendary Webb Peploe's speech at the London Diocesan Conference, and still more from a letter he has recently published, that he, too, makes acceptance of, and conformity to, the decisions of the Judicial Committee of Privy Council an indispensable condition for entertaining the notion of a conference. I can hardly, however, believe that this is the case, for it would suggest that Prebendary Webb

Peploe was endeavouring to make the holding of such a conference, as he had seemed to propose, impossible. If, however, it should be the case—and his recent letter almost implies it—I would venture to ask Prebendary Webb Peploe this question: If acceptance of and conformity with all the decisions of the Privy Council in doctrinal and ritual matters is to be the condition *sine quâ non* of entering into conference, does Prebendary Webb Peploe include in this category the decisions of the Judicial Committee in the case of "Essays and Reviews," in that of Mr. Bennett, and in the case of the Bishop of Lincoln? If so, by a strange irony of circumstance, Prebendary Webb Peploe would find himself committed to views about the inspiration of Holy Scripture and the authority of many portions of the Bible which are certainly not those he is accustomed to teach, and which would seem to be hopelessly contradictory of all his religious beliefs.

Further, he would be committed to the assertion "that to adore, and to teach people to adore, Christ present in the Sacrament under the form of Bread and Wine, believing that under their veil is the sacred Body and Blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," is not, as stated by the Privy Council in Mr. Bennett's case, inconsistent with the formularies of the Church of England. And further, in regard to ritual, he would be committed to the present legality, on the showing of the Privy Council, of the Eastward Position, the use of which in 1875 was adduced as one reason why a Conference could not be held; of lights, of the mixed chalice, of the singing the *Benedictus* before, and of the *Agnus* after Consecration, and, in the future, probably to the legality of the vestments, the decision against which, if the matter should ever come before the Judicial Committee again, is almost certain, as in the case of the Eastward Position, to be reversed.

It concerns us very little what the Judicial Committee, or courts, subject to its jurisdiction, may say on these subjects, but it is not so with those who make the decisions of the Queen in Council the final authority for the Church in England; and if Prebendary Webb Peploe really does include himself among such, I hardly see how he can escape the consequences I have pointed out, or on what grounds he and others who agree with him could decline to take part in a conference for the purpose of mutual explanation.

My own opinion remains exactly what it was in 1874 and 1875. I have never swerved from the conviction expressed then that it is a positive duty, as Prebendary Webb Peploe said in his speech of May 3 in this year, "to lay aside our conventional differences, and as brethren before the Lord to discuss points of crucial difference."

Such a conference would not seek for peace by compromise of truth, but it would seek to ascertain by a definition of terms and by mutual explanations how far existing doctrinal differences are due to misunderstandings, and it would do so in the hope, the well-founded hope as I believe, that such doctrinal differences as might remain, together with our present wide diversity in practice, would not, in view of the existing circumstances of the Church of England, and her past history, be found incompatible with a generous toleration on both sides.

What Might be Done.

Let me illustrate by some examples how much might be done in this way—not by avoiding burning questions, but by resolutely facing them; not by avoiding certain phrases, or surrendering certain practices, but by a better understanding of their meaning, and why they have been adopted.

The doctrine of the Holy Eucharist is one of the greatest occasions of controversy at the present time.

A representative speaker amongst those who sympathise with Prebendary Webb Peploe, in a speech made a short time ago at an important meeting, after asserting that a presence is not the less real, but rather more real, because it is spiritual, went on apparently to deny that there was any presence of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist other than what may be supposed to be implied by the words: "Where two or three are gathered together in My Name there am I in the midst of them"; and in regard to Consecration the same speaker asked, "What does Consecration do?" "Of course," he replied, "there is a change—Consecration involves a change of use, but not a change of nature. Consecration devotes the bread and wine to be the sacred emblems of the Lord's Body and Blood." I suppose what is meant by this is, that what before were common bread and wine, by virtue of Consecration, become, in the words of the Catechism, "the outward and visible sign"—the means whereby the "inward part or thing signified"—that is, the "Body and Blood of Christ," are "given, taken, and received." But since "the outward part or sign," and the "inward part or thing signified" constitute that "Holy Sacrament," the taking of which the Prayer Book tells us is "so comfortable a thing to those who receive it worthily," "so dangerous to those who receive it unworthily," since in the first case "we spiritually eat the Flesh of Christ and drink His Blood," and "our bodies are made clean by His Body"; in the second, "we are guilty of the Body and Blood of Christ," and expose ourselves to the fate of Judas,

"not considering the Lord's Body"—is it not clear that here on the most important subject which lies at the root of existing controversies there is every room for explanation, and that such explanation, if the rule of reference to the Formularies of the Church of England are not to be disregarded, can hardly fail to bring about a great measure of agreement?

Again; when the same speaker asks, "How it is possible to suppose that spiritual blessings can be conveyed by bodily application to the souls of men," is it not obvious that the statements in the Baptismal Service are being ignored, which categorically assert the sanctification of water for the mystical washing away of sin, and the gift of regeneration by means of the outward form of Baptism? Do not such statements show how greatly careful explanations and definitions of terms are required, and how much might be expected from them?

Can we repeat too often that the Eucharist is what it is by virtue of Christ's institution, but that the benefit we receive from our Communions will be in proportion to the faith, and hope, and love, with which we make them?

Is there anyone who teaches that a mere perfunctory, mechanical reception of the Holy Sacrament will do anything else but increase our condemnation, or that a confession without repentance can do anything but add to our guilt? No one that I ever met with has ever so taught.

Our Own Belief.

I have spoken of those who oppose us. Let me add something as to our own belief. Christ's visible presence is indeed withdrawn from us, but we believe that He is with us invisibly but as truly as when He walked with the two Disciples to Emmaus; as truly as when He stood in the midst of His assembled Disciples in the Upper Chamber when the doors were shut, and He chid St. Thomas for his unbelief. He has said, "I will not leave you comfortless. I will come to you." He vouchsafes His presence, not merely with a view to an external presence such as was enjoyed by those who were brought into His company whilst He was visible on earth, but with a view to that internal and spiritual presence of which He spoke when He said to St. Mary Magdalene, "Touch Me not, for I am not yet ascended to My Father."

This presence He, Who was in the days of His visible sojourn upon earth subject to His own creatures, now vouchsafes at His altars according to His own institution, at the voice of His Church. We have no need to ask with Mary

Magdalene where His sacred Body has been laid. We have that Body given into our keeping as often as we will. We possess Him in the Holy Eucharist, and, possessing Him, we repeat in each Eucharist what He did at the last Supper in the Upper Chamber—we offer Him sacramentally present under the outward and visible signs of Bread and Wine to the Father as the Lamb that has been slain in commemoration of that death and passion by which He made a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world.

Jesus Christ in the Sacrament, and out of the Sacrament, is, indeed, in Prebendary Webb Peploe's own words—for I can find none better—"the beginning, the middle, and the end of our religious life."

These are hardly subjects for a meeting like the present; they are hardly subjects for a layman to handle—but the present occasion is an exception, and is there not a cause? I would ask this meeting very solemnly, and through this meeting any who are likely just now to be waiting for our words, whether the attitude taken up by many at the present time in regard to our doctrinal controversies is not due, more than anything else, to the imperfect and unworthy ideas they allow themselves to entertain of God's love?

Is God's love for mankind less now than when He gave His Son to die for us on the Cross?

Is our Lord Jesus Christ less straitened in His yearning to make up for the sins and ingratitude of men now, than when He came to discharge our debt?

Is His desire less now than at the Last Supper, to unite Himself to us, and to make us one with Himself?

But if not, why should it seem a strange thing and an impossible that He should give Himself to us in the Holy Mysteries of His Body and Blood, in order that we may be able to offer Him, the Well-Beloved, the Lamb without spot, to the Father in commemoration of that all-availing sacrifice He made on the Cross for the sins of the whole world, in order also that we may dwell in Him and He in us?

Far from being strange or impossible, is not this just what we should have expected from love such as His?

Did He, when visible upon earth, claim power as man to forgive sins, and shall we find it so hard to believe that in the same tender compassion for sinners He has entrusted to those whom He sends in His Name the power to absolve penitent sinners who truly repent from all their sins? Has not the Church, which is His Body, ever claimed this power of Absolution, and shall we venture to find fault with those who on the strength of His Word seek for the absolution of their sins from those to whom He has said, "Whosesoever sins ye remit

they are remitted?" If that absolution is sought week by week, fortnight by fortnight, month by month, Christmas by Christmas, Easter by Easter, what right have we to interfere?

If so gracious a gift has been entrusted to man, shall we not be faithless indeed if we do not proclaim its existence? Must we not exhort all with whom we have to do, who are struggling with sin and temptation—and who is there free from that struggle?—to have recourse to this means for getting rid of their sins, correcting their faults, and making themselves white and clean for the Marriage Supper of the Lamb?

Are we not, in regard to all such matters, and much else besides, slaves to phrases and ideas, the value of which we have never taken the trouble to gauge?

Are the members of the Church members of a body who are linked together by the closest and most intimate of ties—ties over which death has no power, of whom some are visible on earth, others within the veil, but all of whom are alive unto God? Ought the bond, which in the Church unites us to Christ and to one another, and which links us together by the possession of a common nature, to be treated for all practical purposes as non-existent? In that Society have we no duties to one another? If the Sacrifice which it pleased God to make on the Cross was made for all, why may we not plead that Sacrifice for all, whether they be removed from our sight within the veil, or whether they be now visible upon earth? Has not love an all-compensating power which allows the prayers and sacrifices of one to make up in some sort for the deficiencies of another? If one member suffers, is it not true that the whole body suffers with it? Is not the glory of one member the glory of all? Ought those to be forgotten who, in their day, wrought some great deliverance, who deserved well both of God and man, who, even now, are concerned for those engaged in the same struggle in which they won their crowns?

No honour and reverence, we feel, can be too great to pay to our Queen, that lady of all our hearts. An insult to her is as if one should insult our own mother. We surround the statue of General Gordon with laurel on the day of his death. How even the statue of Lord Beaconsfield is honoured with flowers and outward observance; and shall we not be mindful of the saints of God, who even now are sitting on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel? Is our Blessed Lady as she stands on the right hand of the King, in raiment of wrought gold, worthy of less honour and worship than our gracious Queen, to whom the whole of the British Empire does honour, and glory, and reverence? If honour may be

paid to the statues of sinners, why may not a like honour be paid to the statues of the saints? Shall we not resent any outrage done to the image of Christ and of His Blessed Mother?

Shall we refuse to God, Who has made this world so full of beauty, Who has given us so freely to enjoy sights so beautiful and sounds so sweet, such adornment of outward things as we can bring to the worship of His sanctuary? God does, indeed, ask first and before all for the worship of the heart, "Son, give me Thy heart," but does He on that account refuse the worship of the body? Did He reject the box of ointment very precious poured upon His sacred feet? Ought the adoration of the knee to be divorced from the adoration of the heart? Experience teaches us that, constituted as we are, doctrines to be perpetuated must be enshrined in and symbolised by suitable forms. They require translation into practice if they are to preserve their existence. Two examples of this truth will occur at once: Prayers for the departed have, except by implication, been almost entirely eliminated from the Book of Common Prayer. The result is that, though prayer for the departed is a part of our Catholic inheritance, in practice it had come to be almost entirely ignored.

The Communion of Saints.

The same thing is true of the article in the Creed, "I believe in the Communion of Saints." No article of the Creed is unimportant in our spiritual life, but belief in the Communion of Saints for any practical purpose has not survived the suppression in our public services of those devotions, ascriptions, and invocations which spring from any real belief in it, as the flower does from the root. The result is that our spiritual ancestry is forgotten, the saints ignored, and the Blessed Mother of God deprived of that place in our hearts, and of that reverence and honour which was to be hers throughout all generations.

It is a poor exchange for the *cultus sanctorum* to have seen, as we have done, the growth of spiritualism both here and in America, with all the ineptitudes, and, worse than ineptitudes, of spirit-rapping and inspired mediums.

It is a poor exchange for the solemn pleading of Christ's all-availing Sacrifice at the funerals and in memory of the faithful departed, to have witnessed the growth of memorial services from which all remembrance of sin has been eliminated, and in which the poor sinner who would fain beseech his friends to cry constantly for him to the all-merciful God, finds himself,

to his shame and confusion, treated as if he were already numbered amongst the saints, and worthy of the honours which the Church gives only in the instant of death to those who have passed through the gate of martyrdom into the heavenly Jerusalem.

How far more Christian are the words of that Jesuit writer, the Rev. George Tyrrell, the author of "*Nova et Vetera*," when he says, "After all the Church has done for us—even for the very best of us—after all her teaching, guidance, instruction; after absolutions and blessings and Eucharists and anointings, the most she can say of us at the end, when the priest turns away from our grave with the final 'De profundis' is, 'If Thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss, Lord, who may abide it?' It is only through God's uncovenanted mercies that there is hope for us at all. 'Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, O Lord'—no, not even on the expressed terms of the new covenant—'for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified.'"

Thoughts like these might surely enable us to take more charitable views of our religious differences. They might surely teach us how unchristian it is to pass the judgments upon one another which are now so frequent. I do not think, speaking of ourselves, that we are guilty in this respect. We have not made ourselves the accusers of our brethren. We have not demanded week after week in the press, that such and such clergy, much as we may have disapproved their teaching, and contrary as it may have been to the Prayer Book, should be driven from the Church. We have not promoted Bills in Parliament for this purpose. We have not attempted to carry resolutions in the House of Commons denying such clergy preferment. We have not endeavoured to stir up popular clamour against practices we disliked by the dissemination of untruths. We have not declined to have services in our churches in Holy Week, neglected all observances of Christmas Day and Ascension Day, and then denounced others for the disregard of what we assumed to be the laws of the Church. We have not had recourse to violence and outrage. We have not been robbers of churches. Nor have we desecrated the graves of the dead and insulted the Cross, because the image of Christ in His death was carved upon it. We have done none of these things; we have encouraged none to do them. Yet it is we who hold out the hands of peace, and are endeavouring by all lawful means to win our brethren to more charitable thoughts, a wider toleration, and a fuller acknowledgment of the truth.

Bearing Witness—The Penalty.

Shall we succeed in our efforts, or will our overtures be rejected as they were before in 1874 and 1875, and again two years ago? Should it be so, we shall remain always ready, always willing to entertain any such proposals for conference and explanation as I still hope may issue from Prebendary Webb Peploe's motion at the London Diocesan Conference. If not, we shall continue, God helping us, to witness to what we believe to be the truth and the rights of the Church of England. Whether we have to suffer or not in the future as we have done in the past for bearing such witness is not a matter of any great consequence. We are not put into this world to have what we like, or even to succeed. Suffering is perhaps the best way of bearing effectual witness to the truth, and if it is God's will that we should in any degree be called upon to suffer for what we believe to be the truth, we have only to ask for strength to suffer as we ought.

Mr. Green, during the course of his imprisonment when he was shut up for nearly two years in Lancaster Castle for asserting the rights of the Church against the Public Worship Regulation Act, and for ritual since practically admitted by the Episcopate to be covered by the rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer, wrote to me on two separate occasions as follows:

"To acquiesce in the Public Worship Regulation Act, and that any three persons, no matter who, are to dictate the order of the worship in Christ's Church, is a degradation to which I have not the least idea of submitting the Church. . . . We must go on steadily and in faith, not minding how great the odds against us may be. Whatever happens to *me* personally, the army must go on. It is not for one or even one thousand lives that a General talks of terms or orders retreat."

And again, after the expiration of nearly another year in prison, he wrote:

"Is not the real question . . . . what will best serve the cause of Christ's Church here in England? Will 'the Royal Banners forward go' more surely to victory if Sidney Faithhorne Green is utterly overwhelmed and crushed by the enemy? To me it seems as though the Crucifixion furnishes an immediate reply, *Moriendo vincit; vincit qui patitur.*"

If occasion should come for such witness again—and it is threatened by all these Bills for deprivation, of which we hear so much—we shall do well to remember Mr. Green's words and Mr. Green's example.

The Church of England not a Separate Entity.

I pass to matters connected with the Declaration. We have fought in the past for particular doctrines, for particular practices. To-day it is a battle for the clause in the Creed, "I believe in one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church." It is the fashion now amongst people who profess to be High Churchmen, to talk as if the Church of England was an independent entity—a body which may interpret the Bible as it likes, and may determine its own doctrine and practice quite irrespective of what the rest of the Church, of which it is but a part, may have taught and sanctioned. Need I say that such a principle is the assertion of pure Protestantism, and the endorsement of the principle of absolute private judgment? If a particular National Church has the right to disregard the teaching and practice of the rest of the Catholic Church, why may not an individual in his turn disregard the teaching and practice of the particular Church to which he belongs? I see no answer to that question, and the innumerable sects in England show how such a principle works out in practice. History and experience both show the need there was for reform in the sixteenth century—the writings of Erasmus and Sir Thomas More alone are enough to prove this—but history and experience no less surely show what entirely wrong methods many, even of the best of the Reformers who worked for Catholic Reform and not for Protestant innovation, took to remedy admitted evils. We excuse them for much that they did in view of all the circumstances of the time, but we decline to be bound by their opinions or by their acts. They professed to be anxious for a reform on primitive and Catholic lines. If what they did cannot be harmonised with those lines, it is not Catholic doctrine and practice that has to give way. The changes made in the Liturgy and the statements contained in the Articles interpreted in the light of Catholic doctrine and practice we can accept and justify.

Article XXVIII.

Archbishop Porter, the late Jesuit Archbishop of Bombay, in a letter published in his life, laments that owing to Protestant denials the cultus of the Blessed Sacrament has developed in a way which was not without its disadvantages. It is a way also which is unknown in the East. We can in the same way freely acknowledge the truth of the statement contained in Article XXVIII., that the Blessed Sacrament was not instituted "for the purpose of being reserved, carried about, or worshipped," and at the same time maintain that to

reserve the Blessed Sacrament for the needs of the sick and dying, and to kneel before it when it is so reserved, believing that under the "veil of the consecrated species is the Sacred Body and Blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,"* are practices resulting from the truth of the Real Presence, which, though we may not seek to force them upon others, we have the undoubted right, in view of the general practice and teaching of the Church and the needs of souls, to maintain ourselves. Interpreted as the changes made in the sixteenth century often are, by the opinions and practice of many of whose who were responsible for them, or by the popular prejudices of the present day, we should find them such as it would be impossible for anyone who believed in the Catholic Church to accept. It is worth remembering in this connection that so loyal and typical an Anglican Churchman as Mr. Keble did not shrink from saying (the passage occurs in Vol. ii., page 71, of Dr. Pusey's Life), "That anything which separated the present Church of England from the Reformers he should hail as a great blessing."

To suppose, for example, that the arrangements contemplated by the Reformers in their desire to secure large numbers of communicants at every celebration of Holy Communion when, in consequence of those arrangements, there had come to be usually only six celebrations of Holy Communion in the year, can have any application to our present circumstances, is absolutely unreasonable.

Contradictions in the Prayer Book.

On this subject we ought to be perfectly frank and straightforward, and to admit freely that there are contradictions in the Prayer Book itself which make any consistent carrying out of the arrangements apparently contemplated by it impossible.

On the one hand explicit provision is made in the Prayer Book for a Mass at the least every Sunday and Saint's Day, with a daily Mass during the octaves of Christmas, Easter, the Ascension, and Pentecost. On the other hand, there are directions forbidding the celebration of Mass unless there are a very considerable number of communicants—how considerable may be judged by the fact that in parishes where there are only twenty persons capable of receiving communion, there is to be no celebration of Holy Communion unless a fifth, or at least a sixth, of those capable of communicating in the parish are willing to communicate with the priest. In

* Statement by Rev. W. J. E. Bennett.

regard to the sick and dying, Mass is not to be said in the sick man's house, which, according to the Archbishop's Opinion, is the only method contemplated for the Communion of the Sick, unless the sick man send timely notice to the curate, and provide three, or at least two, persons to communicate with him. How many sick and dying in our crowded towns would now die without Communion were such arrangements observed is only too obvious.

In fact, these arrangements, as a whole, have never been carried out, but, on the contrary, have been systematically disregarded on all sides. Mass has not been said every Sunday and Saint's Day, even in cathedrals and collegiate churches. In many parishes there would have been no celebrations of Holy Communion at all if the numbers prescribed by the Prayer Book to communicate with the priest had been insisted on. And in their general result, so far as they have been observed at all, they have been operative in one way, and one way only—that is, in enormously diminishing the number of Communions made in the English Church, and in reducing the celebration of Holy Communion in popular estimation to what used to be called "the after-service," or a service quite outside the ordinary and normal service of the Sunday.

It is in view of facts like these that it is so dishonest and pharisaical to talk, as some do, about the absence of communicants in those churches, whether at home or abroad, where different arrangements prevail. It is not the fact, to begin with, and even if it were so, the arrangements contemplated by the Reformers, in so far as they have prevailed in England, are responsible to a still greater extent for the same result.

To pretend that the arrangements contemplated by the Prayer Book, after they have been found so disastrous in practice—and it is only the negative portion of them that is insisted upon—are to be adduced as a reason for stopping a daily celebration of the Holy Communion, because it may happen on some particular day that there is no one to communicate with the priest, is, I say it deliberately, a proceeding which, if insisted on, would cost the Church of England many of her most devoted children. The daily Eucharist has been lost once in the history of the Church of England; it shall never, God helping us, be lost again. Neither will the clergy and laity who know the happiness, the joy, and the strength to be derived from Holy Communion endure that the primitive and universal practice of reserving the Blessed Sacrament for the use of the sick and dying should again be taken from them. They desire Communion when they are dying, not as we have recently been told, "as a farewell Christian Communion to link the parting," but as the food for their journey down into

the valley of death, the preservative against the attacks of the Enemy, and the meat in the strength of which they shall ascend to the Mount of God. We cannot, by the neglect of a provision which the Universal Church has sanctioned, and which is admitted to be primitive and of universal observance, afford to run the risk of starting unprepared for that journey.

But it is said that such practices are contrary to the feelings and beliefs of the English people, "that it is impossible to maintain a national Establishment out of harmony with the belief of the majority of the nation," and that they must, therefore, be abandoned. I do not believe that the English nation is opposed to the Catholic religion when that religion is properly put before it. Indeed, the avowed object of the present agitation is to crush the spread of Catholic doctrine and practice before it is too late; but if it be so, if the majority of Englishmen are opposed to the principles enshrined in the Prayer Book, so much the worse for the "Establishment." If the opinions and prejudices of the multitudes outside the Church are to be considered as a factor in the determination of Church doctrine and practice, the sooner those relations come to an end the better. We can have no desire to see the time-honoured relations of Church and State in this country brought to an end. Their destruction would imply that the great majority of the people of this country had abandoned the religion of their fathers; but we will sacrifice those relations to-morrow, with all that such a sacrifice involves, rather than admit the right of those outside the Church to interfere either with her doctrine or her discipline.

The Declaration.

The subject of the Declaration printed on the paper which has been placed in your hands is not one upon which we should, any of us, wish for a discussion. A discussion, indeed, would be clearly out of place in regard to it. It is a declaration dealing with what we have always been taught, with what we have always believed. It is one which has been very carefully drawn up after much consultation, and with the advice of many both inside the Council and out of it. There are obvious reasons for making it at the present moment. The duty of witnessing to the truth is not confined to the episcopate, or to the clergy—it is the duty also of the humblest lay member of the Church. I suppose the duty of the episcopate itself is to witness to the truth which has always been believed and handed down from the beginning in the Churches which they represent. In our degree the duty of

such witness is laid upon us all. It was so in Arian times; it is so still.

We desire, then, at this moment to bear witness, on a matter which touches the very centre and core of our spiritual life, to the truth as we have been taught it.

God hid in the Womb of the Blessed Virgin, God laid in a manger, God dying on the Cross, God present in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar under the forms of Bread and Wine—that is our faith; that is the faith we desire to proclaim.

It is proposed that I should read you the Declaration which has been drawn up, and that, having read it, I should ask those whose faith it represents, and who desire to express their assent to it, to signify their assent by standing up. I will ask those, therefore, who desire to bear witness to our Lord's Adorable Presence in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, and of the worship both inward and outward that is due to Him in that Sacrament, to signify their assent by standing up. I would merely mention, to avoid all possible misunderstanding, that the word "practice," in the last lines of the Declaration, of course refers to the practice of the whole Catholic Church.

THE DECLARATION.

We, Members of the English Church Union, holding fast to the Faith and teaching of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church —that in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper the Bread and Wine, through the operation of the Holy Ghost, become, in and by Consecration, according to our Lord's Institution, verily and indeed the Body and Blood of Christ, and that Christ our Lord, present in the same Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar under the form of Bread and Wine, is to be worshipped and adored—desire, in view of present circumstances, to re-affirm, in accordance with the teaching of the Church, our belief in this verity of the Christian Faith, and to declare that we shall abide by all such teaching and practice as follow from this doctrine of the whole Catholic Church of Christ.

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